

Attachment No. 1

Draft Minutes of September 24, 2025

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**CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 100 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE**

**September 24, 2025
REGULAR MEETING – 4 P.M.**

I. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

General Plan Update Steering Committee (GPUSC) Chair Gardner called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

II. WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

Present: Philip Brown, Kimberly Carter, Nancy Gardner

Staff: Planning Manager Ben Zdeba

Absent: None

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

(This item includes written correspondence received that is not related to items on the agenda.)

None.

IV. CURRENT BUSINESS

a. Meeting Minutes of June 23, 2025 (Attachment 1 – Draft Minutes)

Recommended Action:

Review and approve the minutes of June 23, 2025.

Chair Gardner opened public comments for both Item No. IV-a and Item No. IV-b, hearing the two items concurrently.

Jim Mosher commended the minutes. He stated that on the last page of the July 23rd minutes, the City does not have any historical resources committees, so it should be a lower case “c” in reference to Newport Beach’s historical societies and organizations.

Seeing no one else wishing to comment, Chair Gardner closed public comments.

Chair Gardner agreed with the nuance of the lower case “c” for “city.”

Motion made by GPUSC Member Carter and seconded by GPUSC Member Brown to approve the minutes of June 23, 2025, and July 23, 2025, with Mr. Mosher’s edits to the July 23, 2025, minutes.

The motion carried unanimously.

b. Meeting Minutes of July 23, 2025 (Attachment 2 – Draft Minutes)

Recommended Action:

Review and approve the minutes of July 23, 2025.

The GPUSC approved the July 23, 2025, minutes, with amendments by Mr. Mosher, in the two-item motion listed under Item No. IV-a.

c. Review of GPAC's Meeting on August 6, 2025 (Attachment 3 – Draft Safety Element)

The GPAC Safety Subcommittee met on June 25, 2025, to review the draft Safety Element. GPAC Member Amber Snider was identified as the new Subcommittee Chair. At the conclusion of the Subcommittee's meeting, those in attendance agreed to allow City staff to make revisions and to share the Element with the full GPAC for consideration. The draft Safety Element was shared with the GPAC at its meeting on August 6, 2025. By a unanimous vote of the GPAC members in attendance, the draft was supported with some additional revisions to move on for the GPUSC's review and concurrence with the GPAC's work. Since this time, Dudek has been working with CAL FIRE to begin the review process. Some small revisions were required based on CAL FIRE's initial review. Attachment 3 includes responsive revisions to the GPAC's input, as well as those required by CAL FIRE as redline-strikeout edits.

Recommended Actions:

1. Provide any feedback on the GPAC's efforts; and
2. Receive and file Attachment 3 to express concurrence with the GPAC's actions, allowing the draft Safety Element to be introduced to the Planning Commission and shared with the community as a public review draft thereafter.

Chair Gardner opened public comments.

Mr. Mosher reported that the City Council has recently approved a vendor to redesign the City's website. He expressed concerns that a detailed hyperlink like the one on the first page of the Draft Safety Element will likely not work in the future.

Chair Gardner confirmed that City staff members have made a note of the potential for changing detailed hyperlinks based upon this comment.

Mr. Mosher expressed concerns about the large typeface and recommended using a more user-friendly font size before sharing the draft for public review.

In response to Chair Gardner's inquiry, Mr. Mosher reported that he could not confirm if anything discussed at the August 6th GPAC meeting was left out of the Draft Safety Element being presented to the GPUSC over uncertainties about the status of consultants from Dudek notating the draft policies with reference to the corresponding model policies in the current General Plan. He noted that he was able to perform this cross-referencing with the Draft Land Use Element.

Seeing no one else wishing to comment, Chair Gardner closed public comments.

Chair Gardner stated that the draft captures what the GPAC said at its August 6th meeting.

In response to Chair Gardner's inquiries, Planning Manager Ben Zdeba reported that, with the GPUSC's concurrence, the draft will go to the Planning Commission on October

9th for an introduction with no action required. He agreed that the typeface for the Draft Safety Element is larger than its peers and agreed to reduce it to match the other draft elements. He confirmed that representatives from the Newport Beach Fire Department and Newport Beach Police Department have reviewed the draft and provided input. He added that Dudek has also met a State requirement by reviewing the draft with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFIRE), reporting that their feedback is highlighted in yellow in the draft before the GPUSC. He stated that Dudek is confident CalFIRE will accept the Element upon its completion. He confirmed that the draft will be presented at the City's two General Plan open houses in October.

In response to GPUSC Member Carter's inquiry, Planning Manager Zdeba agreed that staff can provide a table for the Draft Safety Element, like the Draft Land Use Element, showing which of the current General Plan's policies were augmented.

Chair Gardner, with the GPUSC's unanimous verbal approval, received and filed Attachment 3.

d. Review of GPAC's Meeting on September 16, 2025 (Attachment 4 – Draft Land Use Element)

The GPAC Land Use Subcommittee met on July 24, 2025, August 11, 2025, and August 27, 2025, to review the draft Element. GPAC Member Susan DeSantis was identified as continuing to serve as the Subcommittee Chair. At the conclusion of the Subcommittee's trio of meetings, those in attendance agreed to allow City staff to make revisions and to share the Element with the full GPAC for consideration. The draft Land Use Element was shared with the GPAC at its meeting on September 16, 2025. By a majority vote of the GPAC members in attendance, the draft was supported with some additional revisions to move on for the GPUSC's review and concurrence with the GPAC's work. Attachment 4 includes a list of comments from GPAC members and responsive revisions to this input.

Recommended Actions:

1. Provide any feedback on the GPAC's efforts; and
2. Receive and file Attachment 4 to express concurrence with the GPAC's actions, allowing for the draft Land Use Element to be introduced to the Planning Commission and shared with the community as a public review draft thereafter.

Chair Gardner stated that the draft captured the GPAC's discussion.

Chair Gardner opened public comments.

In response to Chair Gardner's inquiry, Mr. Mosher reported that the current General Plan has general principles for many of the city's neighborhoods, not all of which are carried over to this draft.

In response to Chair Gardner's inquiry, Mr. Mosher agreed that everything coming out of the September 16th GPAC meeting is included in this draft.

Ron Rubino requested information about the October open house and expressed an interest in promoting it to members of his Homeowners Association.

In response to Mr. Rubino's inquiry, Planning Manager Zdeba clarified that there will be additional draft elements presented for public review in early to mid-October. He cautioned that the Draft Noise Element may not be ready for the open houses.

In response to Mr. Rubino's inquiry, Chair Gardner confirmed that additional draft elements will be ready in time for the City's open house.

In response to Mr. Rubino's inquiry, Planning Manager Zdeba reported that drones are covered in the Draft Safety Element and there are efforts underway to include drones in the Draft Noise Element.

Mr. Rubino expressed concerns about burgeoning electronic mobility technology, adding that John Wayne Airport is working to accommodate flying electronic vehicles. He clarified that drones and flying electronic vehicles are different things, likely belonging in different places within the General Plan.

Planning Manager Zdeba reported that Draft Safety Element Policy No. S-9.3 calls for study and regulation consideration for emerging technologies such as drones and aerial taxis. He clarified that the General Plan only provides a framework for the City's policymaking and does not create specific regulations.

Mr. Mosher stated that the public should be informed about policies in the existing Land Use Element that will not carry over. He noted how often the Planning Commission considers General Plan compatibility when discussing potential developments. He stated that the public should also be informed of new policies in this draft, citing Draft Policy No. LU-2.4's formal declaration against extending the boardwalk – a concept that many residents will assuredly disagree with, himself included.

Seeing no one else wishing to comment, Chair Gardner closed public comments.

Chair Gardner noted that, in addition to the City's two October open houses, the November Speak Up Newport meeting will also provide an opportunity for the public to provide feedback on the drafts.

Chair Gardner, with the GPUSC's unanimous verbal approval, received and filed Attachment 4.

e. Next Steps

City staff will share the anticipated next steps for the General Plan Update.

Recommended Actions:

1. Receive a report from City staff; and
2. Provide input regarding next steps.

Planning Manager Zdeba reported that the Draft Safety Element and Draft Land Use Element will be brought to the Planning Commission at its October 9th meeting for an introduction. He noted that other boards, commissions and committees have varied in their approach to assessing the elements and reporting their feedback to City staff. He added that the City's goal is to have almost all drafts ready for public consumption by the October 21st in-person Open House and the October 22nd virtual Open House. He noted

that there is already a form on the City's website for residents to provide feedback on some of the draft elements, which are further along in the process. He echoed Chair Gardner's comments about the Speak Up Newport meeting.

Planning Manager Zdeba reported that City staff would like to get feedback from the public and the boards, commissions, and committees by mid-November so that the GPAC and GPUSC can look over the feedback and create drafts suitable for moving forward for formal approvals by the boards, commissions, and committees with a goal of City Council approval in early to mid-2026 but prior to Dudek's contract expiring at the end of June 2026. He added that this timeline is realistic.

V. **COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS OR MATTERS WHICH MEMBERS WOULD LIKE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION, ACTION OR REPORT (NON-DISCUSSION ITEM)**

None.

VI. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, Chair Gardner adjourned the meeting at 4:20 p.m.

Next Meeting: To be determined

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